

Amherst Street - - Alexander Tidball House  
138 Amherst Street  
Winchester  
Virginia

HABS No. VA-694-B

HABS  
VA,  
35-WIN,  
8 -

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey  
National Park Service  
Department of the Interior  
Washington, D.C. 20240

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

AMHERST STREET - - ALEXANDER TIDBALL HOUSE

HABS No. VA-694-B

Location: 138 Amherst Street (northeast corner of Amherst and North Washington Streets), Winchester, Virginia.

Present Owner: Mr. and Mrs. Herbert A. Solenberger

Present Occupants: Owners.

Present Use: Private residence.

Statement of Significance: One of a group of well-preserved representative historic buildings extending for a block on Amherst Street and an example of the conservative local residential style of architecture of Winchester in which many of the features of the eighteenth-century Federal style were retained well into the nineteenth century and the period of the Greek Revival.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

1. Dates of erection. Some time between 1835 and 1848, probably shortly Alexander Tidball's purchase of the property in 1835. Duffield bought the lot in 1795 for 20 pounds and sold it in 1835 for \$1200 to McCormick and Alexander Tidball. The eastern portion of the lot was sold in 1848 for \$1050 and in a Deed of Trust for the same year a two-story brick house is mentioned on this east portion (Winchester, Va. Deed Book No. 9, p. 307). Therefore the \$1200 sale price of the 1835 deed indicates prior existence of a house on the whole lot, and the 1848 deed locates that house on the eastern part of the lot, which was sold off in that year, and which is now designated by the street number 124 Amherst. The sale of the west portion of the lot in 1848 for \$4000 indicates that Alexander Tidball had built his house by this time. Russell's date of construction of 1856 is too late for Alexander Tidball to have built the house, for he ~~sold it~~ died in 1848 (Russell, p. 21).

2. Architect: Not known

3. Original and subsequent owners: The following is an incomplete chain of title for the land of which the house stands.

1795 Deed 5 April 1795, recorded 5 Dec. 1804 in Frederick County, Virginia, Deed Book No. 29, p. 62  
Mary Wood of Frederick Co., widow and devisee of James Wood to  
John Duffield of Winchester

For 20 pounds, a lot in James Wood's addition to Winchester, designated No. 3, bounded on the east by another lot No. 3, on the south by Amherst St., on the west by Washington St., and on the north by lot No. 2.

- 1835 Deed 1 Jan. 1835, recorded 5 Jun. 1835 in  
Winchester, Virginia, Deed Book No. 8, p. 44  
Richard Duffield and other heirs of John Duffield, deceased  
to  
Province McCormick and Alexander S. Tidball of Frederick Co.  
For \$1200, Lot No. 3, same property as 1795 deed, with  
the dimensions given as 108 feet on Washington St. and  
188 feet on Amherst St.
- 1848 Deed 20 Sept. 1848, recorded 22 Dec. 1849 in  
Winchester, Virginia, Deed Book No. 9, p. 306  
Thomas A. Tidball and James Marchall, Commissioners  
to  
Hugh H. McGuire.  
For \$1050, McGuire as highest bidder purchased the house  
and lot on the north side of Amherst St. adjoining a lot of  
Hugh H. McGuire on the east, the lot sold by these commis-  
sioners to Nathaniel Bent on the west, and Joseph Sidebottom's  
lot on the north. (Note: The house on this lot is now desig-  
nated 124 Amherst St.)
- 1848 Deed 17 Nov. 1848, recorded 18 Nov. 1848 in  
Winchester, Virginia, Deed Book No. 9, p. 192  
Thomas A. Tidball and James Marshall, Commissioners,  
appointed by decree of the Supervisors of Frederick County  
in the case of Province McCormick against the devisees of  
A. S. Tidball, deceased  
to  
Nathaniel Bent  
For \$4000, the house and lot belonging to the estate  
of Alexander S. Tidball, deceased. The lot now is 140 feet  
4 inches on Amherst St. and 106 feet 8 inches on Washington St.
- 1879 Deed 31 July 1879, recorded 1 Aug 1879 in  
Winchester, Va., Deed Book No. 16, p. 181  
John Bell, surviving executor of the will of Martha Bent,  
deceased  
to  
T. T. Fauntleroy, Jr.  
For \$4250. The property had been devised to Martha  
in the will of her husband Nathaniel Bent.
- \*  
1882 Deed 28 August 1882, recorded 19 Sept. 1882 in  
Winchester, Virginia, Deed Book No. 17, p. 447  
T. T. Fauntleroy and Bettie S. Fauntleroy, his wife  
to  
Tilman Shumate  
For \$3400.
- 1885 Deed 10 Aug. 1885, recorded 12 Sept. 1885 in  
Winchester, Virginia, Deed Book No. 19, p. 244  
Martha J. Shumate  
to  
Dorsey Walter, Trustee  
For \$1250 paid and \$2500 to be paid.

- \* 1879 Deed 5 Sept. 1879, recorded 19 Sept. 1879 in  
Winchester, Va., Deed Book No. 16, p. 201  
Thomas T. Fauntleroy, Jr. & Bessie S. Fauntleroy, his wife  
to  
William F. Hottle  
Side (east) portion of his lot, fronting 50 feet on Amherst and

- 1918 Deed 6 Feb. 1918, recorded 17 June 1918 in Winchester, Virginia, Deed Book No. 33, p. 479  
Edward J. Evans, et al., Trustees  
to  
Ida V. Crum and Lillie L Crum  
For \$4050.
- 1941 Deed 7 April 1941, recorded 9 April 1941 in Winchester, Virginia, Deed Book No. 62, p. 454  
Shenandoah National Bank of Winchester, executor of Lillie Crum, deceased  
to  
Margaret B. Whetzell and Edna A. Whetzell  
For \$7300, the highest bid. At this time the property had 90 feet frontage on Amherst and 50 feet, approximately, on Washington.
- 1955 Deed 2 Aug 1955, recorded 2 Aug. 1955 in Winchester, Virginia, Deed Book No. 83, p. 397  
Edna A. Whetzell, single  
to  
James F. Whetzell, single, her nephew
- 1966 Deed 3 August 1966, recorded 24 August 1966 in Winchester, Virginia, Deed Book No. 111, p. 445  
James Whetzell, single  
to  
Herbert A. Solenberger and Bernardine K. Solenberger, his wife  
For \$10 etc. The exact dimensions of the lot are given, based on a survey made in 1955: 90.05 feet on Amherst and 53.26 feet on Washington Street. The property is identified by the street number 138 Amherst St.

4. Builder, contractor, suppliers: Not known.

5. Notes on original plan and construction of building: The original plan of the house appears to have been a simple rectangle. The entrance is on the long side, into a central hall, which contained the stairway. In the cellar there are brick foundation walls under the two side walls of the central hall. The spaces at each side of the central hall are subdivided into two spaces, and a stone foundation wall supports the wall that subdivided these spaces. A porch (now enclosed) extended across the east part of the rear wall of the house, included under the simple gable form of the principal roof. A brick vault just under the front entrance suggests that the entrance door may have been recessed some six of eight feet behind the plane of the building facade, the vault being the means of providing a masonry floor for the porch. The present projecting porch may then have been an addition.

6. Notes on known alterations and additions, with dates and architects: The house was extensively remodeled after the present owners purchased it. Hugh T. Stratton of Winchester was the architect for this work. Steel beams and pipe columns were used in the cellar to support the floor of the first story. The central stairway, which previously had been removed from its location in the central hallway, was rebuilt in its original location, duplicating the details of the original stairway from second to third floors, which had remained in tact. Walls were furred to conceal

pipes and ceilings were furred to conceal wiring. Modern narrow-board pine flooring was installed on the first floor over the original wide plank flooring, which was in poor condition. The living room mantelpiece was exchanged for one from a second-floor fireplace because the latter one was in better condition. The second-floor hallway was extended to connect with the rear bedrooms. Bathrooms and kitchens were remodeled and bathrooms were added at the third floor. A concrete floor was poured in the cellar. Doorways connecting the first-floor entrance hall to some of the main rooms were moved. The cellar areaways were blocked up, the areaway gratings were used in the concrete driveway that was added at the rear of the house, and the garden at the east side of the house was planted, involving a raising of the level of the ground.

Previous to the work described above, which was done after August 1966, other alterations had been made. The bay window at the rear of the house (in the dining room and the bedroom above) was an addition, as the brickwork indicates). The rear porch, as mentioned before, had been enclosed, and the central stairway had been moved into the east portion of the house.

#### Historical Events and Persons Associated with the Building:

Alexander S. Tidball was one of Joseph Tidball's four sons, and he married one of the daughters of Edward McGuire. Dr. Hugh Holmes McGuire was her brother. (Russell, pp. 15, 16, 69). Tidball was a lawyer and a businessman. Around 1815, with Roberts, Tygert, and others, he started a cotton factory on Abram's Creek, near Greenwood mills and about two and a half miles from the town, but the venture was not successful (Russell, p. 75). He promoted the Winchester and Potomac Railroad in 1831. He owned other homes in Winchester: one at 212 West Boscawen St. and another known as the Morgan house, on Amherst St. (Quarles, p. 23).

T. T. Fauntleroy, Jr., was a lawyer also and Judge of the Court of Appeals. In the Virginia House of Delegates in 1857-1858 and 1877-1878 he represented the Winchester district (Quarles, p. 23).

From 1885 to 1918 the house served as a parsonage for the Braddock Street Methodist Episcopal Church South and was occupied by ten different ministers and their families (Quarles, p. 23).

John S. Solenberger is in the builders' hardware business, selling also plumbing, electrical, and heating supplies, glass, paint, and tools.

#### Sources of Information

Primary and unpublished sources.

Frederick County, Virginia. Deed Book No. 29.

Winchester, Virginia. Deed Book No. 8, No. 9, No. 16, No. 17, No. 19, No. 33, No. 62, No. 83, No. 111

## Secondary and published sources:

Quarles, Garland R. The Story of One Hundred Old Houses in Winchester, Virginia. 1967

Russell, William Greenway. What I Know About Winchester: Recollections of William Greenway Russell 1800-1891. Staunton, Va:McClure Publishing Co., 1953

Likely sources not yet investigated.

Property tax records for the early 19th century, which the writer understands may be at the State Library in Richmond, Va.

Prepared by:

Wesley Ivan Shank, project historian, July 1972

## PART II, ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

For drawings of the Alexander Tidball House, see AMHERST STREET (HABS No. VA-694)

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